

Appl. No. 10/644,280
Amdt. dated Mar. 21, 2006
Reply to Off. Act. dated Dec. 23, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1. The Examiner rejected claims 1, 4, 5, 8, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Di Meo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2,823,056). Claims 2 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Di Meo et al. ("Di Meo") in view of Madej (U.S. Patent No. 4,417,711). Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Di Meo in view of Bartlett et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,199,756). Claims 6, 7, and 9 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Claims 12-18, 24, and 28-30 were indicated as being allowable. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the amendments and/or remarks provided herein.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

2. Claims 1, 4, 5, 8, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) were rejected as being anticipated by Di Meo. As detailed in Applicant's prior response filed August 23, 2005, Applicant strongly disagrees with the Examiner's characterization of the recitations of claims 1, 4, 5, 8, and 10 in view of Di Meo. Nevertheless, solely to advance issuance of the allowed claims, Applicant has herein cancelled claims 1, 4, 5, 8, and 10, without prejudice to re-presenting such claims in their identical or an amended form in a timely filed continuation application. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw his rejection of claims 1, 4, 5, 8, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(b)

3. Claims 2 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Di Meo in view of Madej. As detailed in Applicant's prior response filed August 23, 2005, Applicant strongly disagrees with the Examiner's characterization of the recitations of claims 2 and 11 in view of Di Meo and Madej. Nevertheless, solely to advance issuance of the allowed claims, Applicant has herein cancelled claims 2 and 11, without prejudice to re-presenting such claims in their identical or an amended form in a timely filed continuation application. As a

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result, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw his rejection of claims 2 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

4. Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Di Meo in view of Bartlett et al. ("Bartlett"). As detailed in Applicant's prior response filed August 23, 2005, Applicant strongly disagrees with the Examiner's characterization of the recitations of claim 3 in view of Di Meo and Bartlett. Nevertheless, solely to advance issuance of the allowed claims, Applicant has herein cancelled claim 3, without prejudice to re-presenting such claim in its identical or an amended form in a timely filed continuation application. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw his rejection of claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Other Amendments to the Claims

5. Applicant has herein cancelled claims 19-21 because such claims are drawn to a non-elected invention. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute such claims and the invention that is the subject matter thereof in a timely filed divisional application.

Allowed Claims

6. Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 12-18, 24 and 28-30 as previously presented and further indicating the allowability of claims 6, 7, and 9 if rewritten in independent form. By the amendments submitted herewith, claims 6 and 7 have been rewritten in independent form. Claim 9 has been left in its previously presented form because it depends from claim 7, which claim has been rewritten in independent form. As noted above, Applicant maintains that claims 1-5, 8, 10 and 11, which have been cancelled by the present amendment, are patentable over the prior art of record at least for the reasons set forth in Applicant's responses filed January 11, 2005, August 1, 2005, and August 23, 2005. Applicant further maintains that cancelled claim 26, as amended in Applicant's non-entered response filed on August 1, 2005, is also patentable over the prior art of record in accordance with the arguments presented in the aforementioned responses. Applicant cancelled claim 26 simply to overcome the Examiner's assertion, in the Advisory Action dated August 19,

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2005, that Applicant's proposed addition of the word "wire" to claim 26 required further search or consideration by the Examiner. As with claims 1-5, 8, 10, and 11, Applicant reserves its right to re-present claim 26 in an identical or amended form in a timely filed continuation application. Solely to advance issuance of the allowed and allowable claims, Applicant submits the accompanying amendments and reserves the right to continue prosecution of any of the cancelled claims via a continuation application.

7. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone, facsimile or email if the Examiner believes that such a communication would advance the prosecution of the instant application. Please charge any necessary fees associated herewith, including extension of time fees (if applicable and not paid by separate check), to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 50-1111.

Respectfully submitted,

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